Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the present patent application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended). A method for combining a plurality of digital video signals, a plurality of digital data signals, and a plurality of upstream communications in a digital headend, comprising;

providing a video interface for receiving said plurality of digital video signals within said digital headend;

providing a data interface for receiving said plurality of digital data signals within said digital headend;

providing an upstream communications interface for receiving said plurality of upstream communications within said digital headend;

buffering said plurality of digital video signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of digital video signals;

buffering said plurality of digital data signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of digital data signals; and

communicating said buffered plurality of digital video signals, said buffered plurality of digital data signals, and said plurality of upstream communications across a common shared bus to a downstream module comprising a downstream QAM modulator, said common shared bus located on said digital headend.

Claim 2 (original). The method of claim 1 further comprising, generating said plurality of upstream communications with at least one set-top box.

Claim 3 (original). The method of claim 2 further comprising, generating said plurality of upstream communications with a distribution system.

Claim 4 (original). The method of claim 2 further comprising, optimizing communications for said buffered plurality of digital video signals, said buffered plurality of digital data signals, and said plurality of upstream communications across said common shared bus.

Claim 5 (original). The method of claim 4 further comprising digitally processing said plurality of digital video signals prior to buffering said plurality of digital video signals.

Claim 6 (original). The method of claim 5 further comprising digitally processing said plurality of digital data signals prior to buffering said plurality of digital data signals.

Claim 7 (currently amended). A method for combining a plurality of digital data signals, a plurality of voice signals, and a plurality of upstream communications in a digital headend, comprising;

provicting a data interface for receiving said plurality of digital data signals within said digital headend;

providing a voice interface for receiving said plurality of voice signals within said digital headend;

providing an upstream communications interface for receiving said plurality of upstream communications within said digital headend;

buffering said plurality of digital data signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of digital data signals;

buffering said plurality of voice signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of voice signals; and

communicating said buffered plurality of digital data signals, said buffered plurality of voice signals, and said plurality of upstream communications across a common shared bus <u>to a downstream module comprising a downstream QAM modulator, said common shared bus located on said digital headend</u>.

Claim 8 (original). The method of claim 7 further comprising, generating said plurality of upstream communications with at least one set-top box.

Claim 9 (original). The method of claim 8 further comprising, generating said plurality of upstream communications with a distribution system.

Claim 10 (original). The method of claim 8 further comprising, optimizing communications for said buffered plurality of digital data signals, said buffered plurality of voice signals, and said plurality of upstream communications across said common shared bus.

Claim 11 (original). The method of claim 10 further comprising digitally processing said plurality of digital data signals prior to buffering said plurality of digital data signals.

Claim 12 (original). The method of claim 11 further comprising digitally processing said plurality of voice signals prior to buffering said plurality of voice signals.

Claim 13 (currently amended). A method for combining a plurality of digital video signals, a plurality of voice signals, and a plurality of upstream communications in a digital headend, comprising;

provideing a video interface for receiving said plurality of digital video signals within said digital headend;

providing a voice interface for receiving said plurality of voice signals within said digital headend;

providing an upstream communications interface for receiving said plurality of upstream communications within said digital headend;

buffering said plurality of digital video signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of digital video signals;

buffering said plurality of voice signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of voice signals; and

communicating said buffered plurality of digital video signals, said buffered plurality of voice signals, and said plurality of upstream communications across a common shared bus to a downstream module comprising a downstream QAM modulator, said common shared bus located on said digital headend.

Claim 14 (original). The method of claim 13 further comprising, generating said plurality of upstream communications with at least one set-top box.

Claim 15 (original). The method of claim 14 further comprising, generating said plurality of upstream communications with a distribution system.

Claim 16 (original). The method of claim 14 further comprising optimizing communications for said buffered plurality of digital video signals, said buffered plurality of voice signals, and said plurality of upstream communications across said common shared bus.

Claim 17 (currently amended). The method of <u>claim 16</u> ~~claim 4~~ further comprising digitally processing said plurality of digital data signals prior to buffering said plurality of digital data signals.

Claim 18 (currently amended). The method of <u>claim 17</u> ~~claim 5~~ further comprising digitally processing said plurality of voice signals prior to buffering said plurality of voice signals.

Claim 19 (currently amended). A method for combining a plurality of digital video signals, a plurality of digital data signals, a plurality of voice signals, and a plurality of upstream communications within a digital headend, comprising;

providing a video interface for receiving said plurality of digital video signals within said ~~within a~~ digital headend;

providing a data interface for receiving said plurality of digital data signals within said ~~within a~~ digital headend;

providing a voice interface for receiving said plurality of voice signals within said ~~within a~~ digital headend;

providing an upstream communications interface for receiving said plurality of upstream communications within said digital headend;

buffering said plurality of digital video signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of digital video signals;

buffering said plurality of digital data signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of digital data signals;

buffering said plurality of voice signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of voice signals; and

communicating said buffered plurality of digital video signals, said buffered plurality of digital data signals, said buffered plurality of voice signals, and said plurality of upstream communications across a common shared bus to a downstream module comprising a downstream QAM modulator, said common shared bus located on said digital headend.

Claim 20 (original). The method of claim 19 further comprising, generating said plurality of upstream communications with at least one set-top box.

Claim 21 (original). The method of claim 20 further comprising, generating said plurality of upstream communications with a distribution system.

Claim 22 (original). The method of claim 20 further comprising, optimizing communications for said buffered plurality of digital video signals, said buffered plurality of digital data signals, said buffered plurality of voice signals and said plurality of upstream communications across said common shared bus.

Claim 23 (original). The method of claim 22 further comprising digitally processing said plurality of digital video signals prior to buffering said plurality of digital video signals.

Claim 24 (original). The method of claim 23 further comprising digitally processing said plurality of digital data signals prior to buffering said plurality of digital data signals.

Claim 25 (original). The method of claim 24 further comprising digitally processing said plurality of voice signals prior to buffering said plurality of voice signals.

Claim 26 (currently amended). A method for combining a plurality of digital video signals, a plurality of digital data signals, a plurality of voice signals, and a plurality of upstream communications within a digital headend, comprising;

    providing a video interface for receiving said plurality of digital video signals within said digital headend;

    providing a data interface for receiving said plurality of digital data signals within said digital headend;

    providing a voice interface for receiving said plurality of voice signals within said digital headend;

    providing an upstream communications interface for receiving said plurality of upstream communications wherein said plurality of upstream communications are generated <u>by at least</u> ~~by least~~ one set-top box;

    digitally processing said plurality of digital video signals within said digital headend;

    digitally processing said plurality of digital data signals within said digital headend;

    digitally processing said plurality of voice signals within said digital headend;

buffering said plurality of digital video signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of digital video signals;

buffering said plurality of digital data signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of digital data signals;

buffering said plurality of voice signals within said digital headend;

generating a buffered plurality of voice signals; and

communicating said buffered plurality of digital video signals, said

buffered plurality of digital data signals, and said ~~said~~ buffered plurality of voice

signals~~, and said plurality of upstream communications~~ across a common shared

bus to a downstream module comprising a downstream QAM modulator, said

common shared bus located on said digital headend.

Claim 27 (original). The method of claim 26 further comprising optimizing

communications for said buffered plurality of digital video signals, said buffered

plurality of digital data signals, said buffered plurality of voice signals and said

plurality of upstream communications across said common shared bus.

Claim 28 (original). The method of claim 26 further comprising, generating said

plurality of upstream communications with a distribution system.